

Washington, DC - Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, joined by Representative Steve Kagen (D-WI), has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives expressing lawmakers' support for the continued growth of home gardening, organic farming, and local foods production across America. Many Americans have recently expressed their concerns about the potential for limitations to be placed on these practices by Congress.

"Americans have a rich tradition of self-sufficiency in growing their own food," Fortenberry said. "New agricultural opportunities are rapidly developing as farmers employ organic farming methods and market locally-raised foods. These practices promote good nutrition, stewardship of resources, and strong local economies. Our public policies should encourage and support them, and we should refrain from over-regulating food production methods that have demonstrated records of sound food safety and sustainability."

The Fortenberry resolution notes that 43 million Americans plan to grow their own fruits, vegetables, herbs, or berries in 2009, a 19 percent increase from 2008, and that by the end of World War II, more than 20 million gardens were providing 40 percent of the produce consumed in the U.S.

It also recognizes the significant growth of local foods systems and farmers' markets, which have increased in number by almost 7 percent since 2006, and the organic foods market, which had sales of nearly \$23 billion last year. Fortenberry is a member of the House Agriculture Committee and Ranking Member of the Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry Subcommittee.

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